AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-10 (Cancelled)

Claim 11 (Withdrawn) A system for purifying an easily polymerizable compound which comprises:

a column for purifying an easily polymerizable compound

a vacuum portion for vacuuming a gas containing the easily polymerizable compound from the column; and

a liquid supply equipment for supplying a liquid containing a polymerization inhibitor to the vacuum portion to thereby come into contact with the gas.

Claim 12 (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 11, where in the vacuum portion comprises at least one or more steam ejectors and at least one or more gas and liquid contact chambers.

Claim 13 (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 11, wherein the gas and liquid contact chamber is a barometric condenser, and the liquid serves to cool the barometric condenser.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 11, wherein the gas and liquid contact chamber is a surface condenser, and the inside surface of the surface condenser is wetted with the liquid.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 11, wherein the vacuum portion comprises a liquid ejector.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 11, wherein the vacuum portion comprises a nash pump.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 11, wherein the vacuum portion comprises a liquid ejector and a nash pump.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 11, wherein the easily polymerizable compound is (meth)acrylic acid and/or (meth)acrylate.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended) A process for inhibiting [[a]] polymerization in a vacuum section of an easily polymerizable compound purification system, comprising the [[step]] steps of

permitting a gas containing an easily polymerizable compound to flow into a gas and liquid contact chamber through a steam ejector from a purifying section; and,

supplying a liquid containing a polymerization inhibitor to the gas and liquid contact chamber, thereby inhibiting the polymerization in the vacuum section, wherein the purification system comprises

the purifying section including a distillation clumn and a condenser, and

the vacuum section including the steam ejector and the gas and liquid contact chamber.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the vacuum section comprises at least one gas and liquid contact chamber, and supplying the liquid containing the polymerization inhibitor to the first gas and liquid contact chamber.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the vacuum section comprises at least two gas and liquid contact chambers, and supplying the liquid containing the polymerization inhibitor to the first and the second gas and liquid contact chambers.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the gas and liquid contact chamber is a surface condenser, and further comprising wetting the inside surface of the condenser uniformly with the liquid.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the gas and liquid chamber is a barometric condenser, and the liquid serves to cool the barometric condenser.

Claims 24-26 (Cancelled)

Claim 27 (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the easily polymerizable compound is (meth)acrylic acid and/or (meth)acrylate.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 19, wherein the polymerization inhibitor is at least one selected from the group consisting of hydroquinone, methoquinone, manganese acetate, phenothiazine, nitrosophenol, cupferron, dibutyl dithio carbamic acid copper salt and N-oxyl compounds.